

**THESIS OUTLINE**  
**FILEONA DKHAR**  
**#0988697**

**TITLE: HEALING SCRIBBLES**

**RESEARCH QUESTION:**

“How to handle a knowledge you desire to claim as yours, while it is both alien to you but also within you?”

Report on creative practice born from the hybrid of using western pedagogical and technological training while rediscovering indigenous knowledge.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **BACKGROUND**

The cadence of my research practice flows through loose processes of visually reiterating code, conversations, media and experience. I see myself as a remixer and not an absolute author of visual narratives. My thesis dives into the motivations of this practice, finding its core in the rootlessness that is my state of being.

I have never lived in a single place for more than 5 years, my Khasi ethnicity is an indigenous identity without sovereign statehood, and I identify as a queer femme. Despite this lack of absolute definition of place (“where do you come from?”) and personhood (“who are you?”), I am sure I have my own identity (“Fileona”). Swimming between absolutes of nationality, race and gender, rootlessness has offered my identity freedom and hybridity.

The thesis narrativizes this contemplation on self while reporting on the practice that it influences. Specifically, it recognizes 4 segments:

1. Addressing a rootlessness where the self (I) feels fragile in the present-day.
2. Indicating the existence of a fractured memory that dwells in the past, when flashbacks are a search for identity.
3. Connecting with tradition to start a creative practice.
4. Addressing “futurism” as the energy that drives new narratives, a way to move on.

### **STATEMENT**

The process of undertaking this thesis is a process of generating healing in my practice. It allows room for my “voice” as I tackle appropriating the mythical knowledge of my Khasi identity (fairies, spirits, dreams, energies, vanishings) through lens-based media, a predominantly western practice with colonial origins.

The thesis is a creative report on practice. It is called “Healing Scribbles.” Healing invites the process of internal contemplation as my research practice. Scribbles generate the image of random non-utilitarian strokes, a metaphorical recognition that this thesis is not a dogmatic or theoretical analysis of my practice or identity. I hope it conveys my position of existing in the western world and the rediscovery, as if in poetic dreams, of a lost culture. It includes poetry, scripts, journal entries, essayistic reflections and annotations.

I hope that this thesis is something I want to go back to for phrases, pointers and future bodies of work.

## II. BODY

### 1. ALL I'VE EVER BEEN

In this chapter I will examine two of my works, “Displacement Mandala” and “DIY Focal Camera: Micro to Macro to Micro.” “Displacement Mandala” (<https://vimeo.com/377803809>) is a work I've been making with Google Earth's in-camera function to record all the places I've called home. “DIY Focal Camera: Micro to Macro to Micro” is a work where the satellite image of a place is remixed into microscopic pixel, photograph, and gif. Both works share the compositional theme of “scale.” Both works serve as evidence of a creative practice generated from contemplation on rootlessness. I will expand on “scale” and rootlessness through two short creative writings:

- *The Self is Fragile, there are many ways of being.*
- *If I outsource all my emotions onto a screen, what does my phone look like in my dreams?*

### 2. FLASHBACKS AND DREAMS

A chapter dedicated to grasping the fractured narratives (societal and personal) of the indigenous past but only through dreams and folklore. I will discuss my work “Pixel Landscape” (<https://vimeo.com/user105963493>) the only work I was able to make during COVID-19. It also includes:

#### i. *By the Stream*

Within the Khasi culture of my ancestors, streams are sites of fantasy. For me, they are sites of storytelling. This segment will include annotations from my reading of Soso Tham's Tales of Darkness and Light, specifically verses that discuss streams, rivers and landscape.

#### ii. *My Skin began to peel, Man who Disappeared for a Month, Man who Stopped Moving and the Forest We Left Behind*

These are stories built on rumors I overheard while growing up. I recall them as flashbacks now. They depict my understanding of rumors within Khasi beliefs, while also reminding me of my indigenous home where magic and rumors link up.

### 3. MAKING CONTACT

A chapter dedicated to the process of reaching out to the “roots,” trying to mend fractured narratives and giving them a form. It includes:

- i. Conversations with Home (English translations of conversations with family and friends but combined into one monolithic dialogue)
- ii. 30 days exchange with Lapdiang Syiem (becoming energy barometers)
- iii. Forging my own mythology by introducing 30 nameless, genderless, stateless Fairy Friends accompanied by the script: *Dancing with Jelly Fairies in Heaven*

### III. CONCLUSION

*We Sit by the Stream and Dream of Another World: Making Meaning from Improbable Relationships*

A chapter dedicated to futurism in creative practices. What do I do after forging my mythology? Am I still rootless? Am I still indigenous? What is the future for an indigenous creative?

I want to close the thesis while comprehending my artistic practice (lens-based art), tying it to notions of indigenous folklore, diasporic hybridity, fantasy, futurism and healing.

### IV. REFERENCES

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